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Nanette Lee Reynolds has served as director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) and on the Governor's Cabinet since April 1993, making her the longest serving director in the agency's 38 year history. She reports to the eight-member Michigan Civil Rights Commission. During her tenure, the department was successfully reengineered to increase general efficiency and effectiveness, while adding several new services for Michigan residents. She utilized MDCR's internal diversity and promoted an environment of constant professional growth, both in general skill enhancement and cultural competency, to improve the department's ability to serve the state's increasingly diverse population.

Dr. Reynolds' intuitive and innovative leadership, combined with the incredible cooperation and dedicated work of her colleagues, has made MDCR a model among state civil rights departments sharing the mission of eliminating unlawful discrimination. She ushered in a new age of inter-agency cooperation, demonstrating a remarkable ability to bring together state, federal and local agencies along with both public and private organizations to work toward common goals. Beginning her tenure with the theme, "People in Partnership for Progress," she presided over the creation of a more customer service oriented MDCR that balanced the need to aggressively enforce civil rights laws with the need to progress the agenda of civil rights through social collaboration.

Through both Democratic and Republican administrations, Dr. Reynolds has received numerous accolades for her leadership and commitment to civil rights, recently including: the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee's Civil Rights Award received at ADC's 20th National Convention in Washington, D.C. in June 2003; the Michigan State Conference NAACP's Community Service Award in September 2002; and the Anti-Defamation League's Women of Achievement award for 2003.

The department under her leadership also recently received two awards from the federal agencies with which MDCR contracts; the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) award for Innovative Joint Outreach given in Chicago, Illinois in May 2003 and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) award for Commitment to Fair Housing and Excellence in Homeownership received in Atlanta, Georgia in April 2003. In 2000 she received the National Association of Human Rights Workers' (NAHRW) Individual Human Rights Award. These are just recent examples of the many commendations bestowed on Dr. Reynolds and MDCR for cutting edge leadership in the field of civil rights services.

Dr. Reynolds currently serves as Chair of the Advisory Board of NAHRW's Journal of Intergroup Relations. Dr. Reynolds is on the boards of the Michigan affiliate of The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ), ADC, and has been active with Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust (ALPACT) in the Detroit/Southeastern Michigan area. In 1997 Dr. Reynolds represented Michigan's governor in his role as Honorary Chair of the 1997 Goodwill Mission to Shiga Prefecture, Japan; and she led a delegation of 54 Michigan adults and teens to Japan that summer.

In November 1997, Dr. Reynolds was one of some 350 invitees from across the nation to the White House Conference on Hate Crimes. Subsequently, a bias crime initiative which she assisted in designing and implementing in Michigan several years earlier was incorporated into a statewide project co-sponsored by the Civil Rights Commission and Department with the U. S. Department of Justice.

Dr. Reynolds earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Howard University in Washington, D.C., and a master's degree in education from Southern Illinois University. She graduated with a doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 1978. In her early career she was a higher education administrator at Brown University (Providence, RI), MIT (Cambridge, Mass), and the University of Rochester (New York). She has served in Michigan State government for twenty years.